Court gives Ute Indian tribe go-ahead signal

A temporary restraining order filed against Martin M. Zollar, Superintendent of the Uintah and Ouray Agency, was set aside Monday, March 6, by Federal Judge Willis W. Ritter. The temporary order issued in October of 1960 was requested by Margaret Rose Sprouse, a member of the Affiliated Ute Citizens of Utah, who charged that the Ute Indian Tribe should not be allowed to participate in the purchase of shares of stock in the Rock Creek Cattle Range Company and the Antelope Sheep Range Company, two corporations organized by the Affiliated Ute Citizens of Utah.

JUDGE RITTER ruled that the legislation which authorized the division of the assets between the Full Blood Group and the Mixed Blood Group (Public Law 671, 68 Stat. 686), specifically provided that if the Mixed Blood Group or its members wished to dispose of their interest prior to termination or for a period of ten years from August 27, 1954, they must first offer the interest to the members of the tribe including both the Full Blood members and the Mixed Blood members.

The order as issued had ordered the Superintendent to refrain from selling any of the interest in the two corporations to the Ute Indian Tribe or to any of it's Full Blood members.

THE FULL Blood Group, or the Ute Indian Tribe, was proposing to bid for the purchase of 490 shares of stock belonging to the Mixed Blood Group involving some 172,453 acres of range land with an appraised value of $281,000.00 after they were offered for sale.

Mrs. Sprouse, a member of the Affiliated Ute Citizens, is also interested in bidding for the purchase of the stocks. She alleged in the complaint filed concurrent with an injunction against Superintendent Martin M. Zollar, that before any member of the Affiliated Utes can sell his or her stock, it must be offered to other members of the Affiliated Ute Group.